

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1422

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 4246

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CO, SNAR

SUBJECT: TODMAN VISIT; MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER

1. ASST. SECY TODMAN MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER
LIEVANO AFTERNOON MAY 9. LIEVANO WHO HAD OBIOUSLY
PREPARED PRESENTATION FOR THIS MEETING, CONCENTRATED ON OAS
HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRADE ISSUES BUT ALSO COMMENTED BRIEFLY
ON NARCOTICS PROBLEM.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER REITERATED GOC CONCERNS ABOUT
HOLDING OF NEXT OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN GRENADA
BECAUSE OF LACK OF CONFERENCE FACILITIES THERE. HE
OBSERVED THAT SINCE MEETING COULD BE SUPPORTED FOR
ONLY A FEW DAYS IN GRENADA THERE WOULD BE TIME TO DISCUSS
ONLY THE NEGATIVE AND CONTENTIOUS ISSUES ON THE
AGENDA AND NOT TO GO ON TO MORE CONSTRUCTIVE MATTERS.
HE COMMENTED THAT MEETING SHOULD REALLY BE TRANS-
FERRED TO WASHINGTON. TODMAN SAID WE WERE AWARE
OF THE PROBLEMS GOC PERCEIVED IN THE GRENADA LOCATION
BUT THAT IT WAS HARD TO FIND DELEGATIONS WHO WOULD
EXPRESS SUCH VIEWS OPENLY. HE ASKED IF LIEVANO
WOULD ATTEND EVEN IF THE MEETING WERE HELD IN GRENADA.
LIEVANO REPLIED THAT HE PROBABLY WOULD ATTEND BUT
HE THOUGHT THAT MANY FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD SEND DEPUTIES
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INSTEAD.

3. LIEVANO EXPRESSED VIEW THAT OAS WAS IN A STATE OF
CRISIS. IT WAS AN EMPTY ORGANIZATION WITH NO IMPORT-
TANT TASKS OR MISSION. IT WAS NOT EVEN PLAYING A ROLE
IN THE NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE. HE CITED STATEMENTS BY
THE US ADMINISTRATION FAVORING TRADE LIBERALIZATION BUT

ARGUED THAT THIS ATTITUDE WAAS NOT ACTUALLY BEING PRACTICED WITH RESPECT TO LATIN AMERICA. HE THOUGHT IT ESSENTIAL FOR THE US TO ANNOUNCE SOME STEPS TOWARDS LIBERALIZATION AT THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY. IF WE INSTEAD CONCENTRATED ONLY ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, HE THOUGHT US WOULD COME UNDER SERIOUS CRITICISM.

4. COMMENTING FURTHER ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM, LIEVANO SAID THERE WAS A NEED TO KEEP IN MIND THE DIVERSITY OF LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS AND TO APPROACH HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS ON A COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY BASIS IN CONNECTION WITH THE NEGOTIATION OF SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS ON ECONOMIC OR MILITARY ASSISTANCE. IT WOULD NOT BE WISE, IN HIS VIEW, TO TAKE A BROAD APPROACH, MAKING LOUD PROCLAMATIONS. LIEVANO COMMENTED THAT 80PCT OF THE LA NATIONS HAD HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS AND THAT THE US WAS LOSING FRIENDS EVERY DAY ON THIS ISSUE. HE SAID HE SAW A DANGER THAT THE COMMUNISTS, BEING SUPERB TACTICIANS, WOULD TRY TO IDENTIFY OR CONFUSE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE WITH IMPERIALISM AND THUS EXPLOIT IT FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES.

5. TODMAN EXPLAINED THAT THE USG COMMITMENT TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAUSE WAS AN ESTAVLISHED FACT AND THAT WE WERE TRYING TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO AVOID THE DANGERS ANDPROBLEMS THAT LIEVANO HAD CITED. LIEVANO EXPRESSED VIEW THAT THERE WAS NEED TO ESTABLISH A GENERAL CRITERION FOR ASSESSING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. HE OBSERVED THAT CERTAIN ANONYMOUS PARTIES

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WERE ACCUSING COUNTRIES LIKE COLOMBIA, VENEZUELA AND COSTA RICA OF SUCH VIOLATIONS AND THAT THESE DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES WERE THUS BEING LUMPED TOGETHER WITH DICTATORSHIPS WITHOUT THE DIFFERENTIATION THAT WAS WARRANTED. TODMAN AGREED THAT THERE WAS NEED FOR A CRITERION AND EMPHASIZED THAT USG WAS CONCERNED NOT ABOUT ISOLATED CASES BUT RATHER ABOUT A SYSTEMATIC PATTERN OF VIOLATIONS THAT REFLECTED GOVERNMENT POLICY.

6. REVERTING TO THE TRADE ISSUE, LIEVANO REITERATED NEED FOR US GIVING PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT TO LATIN AMERICA. HE SAID THAT FEW COMMODITIES WOULD BE INVOLVED (SHOES, FLOWERS, TEXTILES, SUGAR, COFFEE, WHEAT, WOOL, FOR EXAMPLE) AND THAT THE TOTAL VOLUME OF THE TRADE WOULD BE SMALL IN COMPARISON WITH THAT OF MAJOR US TRADING PARTNERS LIKE TAIWAN, KOREA AND HONG KONG. HE ARGUED THAT THIS SORT OF SPECIAL TRADING RELATIONSHIP WOULD BE CONSONANT WITH THE SPECIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN US AND LATIN AMERICA THAT WERE THE

RAISON D'ETRE OF THE OAS. MOREOVER, HE THOUGHT THAT BY DEALING IN THIS WAY WITH THE NORTH/SOUTH PROBLEM IN A HEMISPHERIC CONTEXT WE WOULD BE TAKING PRACTICAL STEPS TOWARDS A GLOBAL SOLUTION. WHEREAS TO START BY SEEKING A GLOBAL SOLUTION WOULD BE FRUITELSS AND FORCE THE LATIN AMERICANS INTO THE THIRD WORLD BLOCS THAT WERE SO COMMON A FEATURE IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT WERE GOLBAL OR WHICH INCLUDED SEVERAL REGIONS. HE THOUGHT THAT A HEMISPHERIC APPROACH WOULD "DECONGEST" THE GLOBAL CONFRONTATIONS COMMON TO THESE ORGANIZATIONS. LIEVANO RECALLED THAT HE HAD MADE A SPECIFIC PROPOSAL ALONG THESE LINES AT THE OAS MEETING IN SANTIAGO AND HAD LEFT IT ON THE TABLE WITH THE HOPE THAT OTHERS WOULD TAKE IT UP, MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS TO IT AND THUS GIVE IT GREATER POTENTIAL THAN IF IT WERE SIMPLY REGARDED AS A COLOMBIAN OR LIEVANO PROPOSAL. TODMAN RECALLED THAT THE RECEPTION GIVEN THE PROPOSAL

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AT SANTIAGO HAD BEEN LUKEWARM AT BEST. LIEVANO AGREED BUT INSISTED THAT SUPPORT WAS BUILDING UP, PARTICULARLY FROM THOSE NATIONS WO NOW FOUND THEMSELVES CLOSED OUT OF TRADITIONAL MARKETS LIKE THAT OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AND THE GROUP OF NINE.

7. TODMAN THANKED LIEVANO FOR THIS EXPOSITION OF VIEWS ON THE TRADE ISSUE AND SAID THAT HE WOULD LOOK AGAIN AT THE LIEVANO PROPOSAL. HE UNDERLINED THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S INTEREST IN OPEN, NON-COMBATIVE EXCHANGES WITH LATIN AMERICAN LEADERS AND SAID THAT THROUGH SUCH FRANK GIVE-AND-TAKE PROGRESS WAS POSSIBLE ON A VARIETY OF FRONTS.

8. DURING A BRIEF EXCHANGE ON NARCOTICS, TODMAN MENTIONED AGAIN THE MS. FALCO WOULD BE VISITING COLOMBIA SHORTLY TO MEET WITH GOC OFFICIALS. LIEVANO COMMENTED THAT NARCOTICS WAS A "GRAVE " PROBLEM, THAT IT WAS GROWING AND THAT THE GOC WAS VERY MUCH IN NEED OF HELICOPTERS, LAUNCHES AND OTHER EQUIPMENT TO HELP FIGHT THIS BATTLE.
DREXLER

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